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A DOUBLE EGG.—Yesterday one of my servants, on opening a hen's egg found another egg within it. The inclosed was about the size of a robin's egg, with a well-formed, slightly rough shell. It lay in the white. The parent egg was fully formed and was eaten. I heard of it on arriving home, and secured the small one. It has not yet been opened.—E. L. S.

There are two similar specimens in the Museum of the Essex Institute. Two cases are also mentioned as occurring in England, in *Hardwicke's Science Gossip*, in which it states that a "communication was made last year to the Académie des Sciences of France, of a similar occurrence."—EDITORS.

HABITS OF THE STRIPED SNAKE.—A case of the common striped snake killing its prey—a common mouse—after a chase by crushing it in its folds in the boa constrictor manner, has for the first time come to my knowledge. In trying to escape, the mouse ran up the inner angle of a wall some eighteen inches, when the snake (which was about twenty-four inches in length) caught it, enveloping it in its folds with lightning-like rapidity, crushed and killed it, and then swallowed it, all after the manner described of the large constrictors, except perhaps the chasing.—F. W., *Newark, N. J.*

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## MICROSCOPY.

THE MICROSCOPE IN GEOLOGY.—D. Forbes, in the Popular Science Review, writes on this rather novel subject. After a few prefatory remarks upon the general advantages of the use of the Microscope in studying the intimate structure of rocks, the author divides them all into two classes, "Primary or Eruptive," and "Secondary or Sedimentary Rocks." Under the first head he states that "the mineral constituents of such rocks are seen to be developed as more or less perfect crystals, at all angles to one another," which he infers could only take place in a rock at one time, "in a state of liquidity or solution" (aqueous or igneous). When "quartz, leucite, calcite, felspar," and other colorless minerals present similar appearances in thin sections, they may be distinguished by "their optical properties and the use of polarized light;" by similar tests different forms of the same mineral may be separated, and the structure, whether crystalline or vitreous, determined, and the alterations in eruptive rocks produced by the action of water, the atmosphere, or other agencies advantageously studied. In conclusion, reference is made to the discovery by Sorby of the existence "of numerous minute fluid cavities in the quartz of granites," and also in volcanic rocks, "in the felspar and nephiline ejected from the crater of Vesuvius." These facts, and the farther statement that "fluid vapor, gas, and stone cavities, are common both to the volcanic quartz-trachytes and the oldest granites," are used as proving the great value of the microscope in this branch of inquiry. Under the head of Sedimentary Rocks, the author distinguishes three kinds or classes: 1st. "Those composed of the immediate products of the breaking up of eruptive rocks." 2d. "Rocks built up of the more or less rounded or angular debris of previously existing sedimentary or eruptive rocks." 3d. "Rocks composed of mineral substance extracted from aqueous solution by crystallization, precipitation, or the action of organic life." Strata of the first class are often identical in aspect and chemical composition, but their irregular sedimentary structure is dissolved upon submitting them to the microscopical test. Very fine, compact rocks may be distinguished from crystalline rocks by the same means. "Roofing-slate, however, has a definite arrangement of the particles in lines, which constitute the lines of weakness or the cleavage of the slate." This arrangement, however, is explained by the effects of pressure, applied at right-angles to the structure itself, causing an elongation of some, together with a sliding movement of others of the particles.

Under the third head we notice that the clays of Staffordshire, when altered by contact with basaltic dykes, present a structure identical with common stoneware made from the same clays, and show "no change in mineral or chemical composition, beyond the expulsion of the water always contained in such beds." The foliated schists, quartzites, etc., show the contours of the original sand-grains, and, as Sorby has pointed out, the existence of ripple-drift and wave-structure.

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## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THE MISTLETOE.—I believe it is the common opinion of naturalists that the common Mistletoe of this Southern country steals the *elaborated sap* from the stalk which supports it. I think it can be proved that it *does not*, but that it draws its portion of *crude* sap and elaborates it, returning a portion to the tree on which it grows. I would be very glad to know if I am correct in reference to the *common opinion* of *naturalists*, and will oblige you to inform me.—J. M.

It is not the common opinion that the Mistletoe of the Southern States, or, in fact, any parasite with green foliage, draws *merely* elaborated sap from its host; otherwise why the green leaves? We know that the office of green leaves is to elaborate sap, and therefore in those plants (*Orobanchaceæ*, *Monotropa*, etc.) which depend wholly upon their hosts for elaborated nourishment, we find no green leaves. We should be glad of the record of any observations, which have been carefully made, with the view of proving experimentally that the Mistletoe does not take elaborated sap alone (for it very probably takes *some*) from its host, as they could not fail to be interesting.—H. M.

THE MASTODON IN KANSAS.—I send you a photograph and description of a vertebra of some species of the *Mammalia* for determination. The whole skeleton is said to be imbedded in the mud in one of our